October 4th 2024

Milan, Italy I am no stranger to traveling and airports such as New York, San Francisco and even Seattle were/are all "hell holes". I've traveled through many cities over time United States and Europe. There are few which I have not been too. Traveling to Milan and view it before arriving was an easy airport to navigate.

I flew from Seattle to Amsterdam and transferred to Milan Malpensa International Airport. The transfer was smooth and I arrived by 12:30 PM in Milan.

We had planned to coordinate our arrivals. Dave flew from - London fifteen minutes after my arrival. Paul drove from his home in Gussago and planned to meet us at the airport.

However, the best laid plans sometimes don't work out. Let me elaborate …first, Dave didn't realize the one hour time difference between London and Milan, which left him arriving at 1:45 PM instend of the planned 12:45. I knew the time difference and decided to wait at Terminal 3. I tried to call Dave to let him know where I would meet him know where I would meet him.

Dave, however, was on the tarmac ready to leave but the pain was grounded due to technical problems. The budget airline, Spirit Airlines, did not have internet capabilities onboard.

Dave was stuck like a pig in a poke without internet connection. Dave called Paul prior to leaving letting him know my arrival time at 12:30. I didn't have any luggage as I always travel light and carry my baggage online. I walked through security and to Terminal 3, thinking it would be a logical meeting point. Most travelers would walk through passport controls, security and would then exit at or near Terminal 3.

I texted Dave five or six times. I did not know the situation. As I waited outside, amid the cigarette smoking people, I looked for Paul, however, I didn't have his cell phone number, nor did he have mine. It had been over 15 years ago since I last saw Paul. I imagined "maybe he had lost his hair, maybe he had grey hair", but I did remember him as a five year old dancing on the tip of his feet without shoes on. And yes, later when we did meet Paul said (I was looking for Gordon being grey haired and corpulently fat. So it became a game of button-button who's got the button, and of course, as I found out later. Yes I looked for a Paul in two ways as the image in my implementation.

A moment of Anxiety

I was tired having travelled 18 hours from Seattle to Italy without much sleep made my mind wander in my fog. Every car that passed I would look for a Paul I didn't know, eventually I gave up. I stood for one an hour holding my baggage, and looking like the lost soul on Gilligan's Island. The appandoment plays tricks on the mind. I had the withall to know one solid idea, do not move away from the terminal 3 area because if Dave did show up he would have to go through terminal 3 to exit, and quite logically he would see me.

After about two hours standing outside, I had a flashback, and thought it could reasonably be real. Dave and I had traveled to London in September 1973, fifty years ago. We had arrived in England, two lost souls ready for a European adventure, but knowing about the large city of London was tantalizing and foreign. In central London, near St. Paul's Cathedral, we found a flop house to spend the night, which we thought was grand, except there were rows of bedrooms that filled up over the long night with drunk, snoring men from the streets of London. The next day walking away from the flop house around Piccadilly Circus we got disconnected and didn't see each other for another three months when we met at the Tel Aviv youth hostel, Israel.

Waiting at Piccadilly Circus

Waiting for Gadod in London 1973

Standing at Terminal 3, slightly gazed, I thought that maybe Dave was still in London and had walked back to Piccadilly Circus to look for me. My mind was frazzed but the circumstances were far too similar. I thought serendipity could hit twice. I grapeled with my own absurdity!!!

I started to realize that I didn't know where Paul lived. I stood around Terminal 3 and now hours later there was no Paul and no Dave. I thought, is it time to pull out Plan B? Second hand cigarette smokers drifted around me. The smoke lit a memory that made me think of Doctor John, our High School athletic physician who tested all boys *"now turn your head and cough".* We would then feel my scrotum to check if testicles were swollen. Now why I had that reflection confused me, but I thought maybe the connection between smokers and the Doctor telling me turn and and cough oddly had great similarity.

It suddenly struck me, running towards three hours since arriving. Maybe it was time to move on. An idea popped into my mind. I could take a train from Milan to Marseille, France, meet up with Catherine as she could pick me up at the train station. It's only an hour drive from Marseille to Ménerbes near the house. But then it dawned on me, Dave would never forgive me. Being sleep deprived, I thought that maybe the Milan airport would allow me to sleep overnight and not kick me out.

I waited on **Terminal 3** and Dave did arrive, after taking several laps around the airport. Paul popped up in his car, profusely apologizing. But I didn't mind, I had travelled in my own time warp and was happy to be together with friends.

I found later that Dave had a terrible experience with a taxi cab driver from France who had picked him up, driven him to a remote location and told him that he needed to pay him $600 dollars, which he did of course to get his baggage out of the truck of the car. The cab driver was eventually fired for his action, but Dave never recovered the $600 dollars.

Misery follows pain…Dave's flight from London was delayed unreasonably. Spirit Airlines was notably one of the worst in Europe for service and delivery times. So bad was it that three weeks later, the company went bankrupt and was looking for a buyer to pick it up. The company used old DC-9s, a defunct airline which stopped making the plane in the mid-90s. McDonnell Douglas made the plans in Los Angeles California in August 1967. It was sold to Boeing in 1990 McDonnell aircraft decommissioned. Poor Dave flying on a pig in poke.

Struggles Continue

I was very happy that Paul had come to pick us up and show us the wonderful VRPO that was built in the 10 AD. The VRPO is very close to Paul's home. As we drove my mind wondered. I knew a little bit about the area and wondered if Paul had considered a VRBO if the home where *Benito Mussolini* had been born. It didn't bother me. I wasn't worried if Paul's house may have been part of *Mussolini's* family's home.

Mussolini's Family Friends
Province of Forlì-Cesena

Paul said his home was on the side of a steep hill. Because Dave had a very big, heavy travel bag, and I had a *fimi petite* bag and a backback which kept we light weight.

October 4th-7th, Lombardy, Italy
Paul Keegan, his wife, and dauther, Chincia live in Gussago

October 4-6th 2024

Dave and I stayed at *Hotel* ***Torre de Salis BnB***

Built in the 10th AD century, the de Salis family owned the private castles. The castle was built as a stronghold for military quarters until the 16th century. During the 17th century, the military garrison was abandoned. Over time the de Sais family owned and used it as a private residence. Today the residence is rented as a VRBO.

Paul had set up the lodgings. We stayed in the executive sweets. It was past the tourist season. We were the only people in the hotel.

Gordon used the lower suite,Dave was upstairs

October 5th 2024 Le Cantorie Winery. We had a delious lunch with wite wine.

October 6th 2024
Gasoline for two

Bill…glad you have the keen eye of observation. We stopped to fill the tank. In the car I observed Dave paying for his portion of the gasoline. Dave whipped out a 5 Euro bill and gave it to Paul who picked up the remaining 55 Euros. **Good call Bill**.

On the drive to Accademia Carrara Museum, I chatted with Paul to catch up since we had not seen each other for over 15 years. It was Christmas at Denis and Martha hosting astravaganza. My son, Philippe, still remembers going to the Keegan and stating he had gone to "Diversity Project family".

During the drive to the museum, Paul stated he had worked for an Italian international he worked for a firm that provided females facial care. I have known Paul since he was a five-year old who could tap dance without shoes tips of toes. He was quite skilled showing Dave and I dancing outside.

Since our youth, Paul learned to speak Italian, joined the company that sells female's skincare to company's throughout the world. Paul has succeeded in learning his craft and advanced the stock of the holding company. He explained to Dave and me, in great detail, about skin care products, their consistency and how women adored the products, and I gathered, Paul as well. Of course, I listened intently to the conversation, as my scaly white toned skin might need a brushup. But then I thought you can't make damped whike skin look good on a person who has lived in the Pacific Northwest environment. Skin or no skin because there is not enough light in the dampness of sun that only shines 50 days at full sunlight. I am a sixty-niner going on 70th, an old curbudgeon…at least I still have my teeth!!!

Then I had a moment of clarity. Maybe Paul needs to sell a new product, maybe not to brighten people's teeth, but to sell more beauty products to men. I had to dig deep to find a something for men's hair care. Yes indeed many men are balding. I have located a solution in a YouTube link. I know many are in shocked over the election so caveat emptor and don't respond if you are in agony or misery. Kick the YouTube below.

YouTube 1965 Brylcreem Women beware!!!

Paul and Dave Stair Way To Heaven

If I said Coutess Anastaroa Spini looks like my Mother, I would get a severe backhand. Now David, I don't know about Martha's reaction, but maybe its best Dave delete the painting!!! Painting 1840

City of Bergamo

Accademia Carrara Muesum *Botticelli had a lifelong interest in the great Florentine poet Dante Alighieri, which produced works in several media. He is attributed with an imagined portrait. According to Vasari, he "wrote a commentary on a portion of Dante", which is also referred to dismissively in another story in the Life, but no such text has survived.*

Raffaello
Saint Sebastian 1592

Sandro Botticelli (Alessandro Filipepi)
Firenze, 1445 circa - 1510
Ritratto di Giuliano de' Medici
Portrait of Giuliano de' Medici
1478 - 1480 circa
tempera e olio su tavola | tempera and oil on panel
dono Giovanni Morelli, 1891
Restauro sostenuto da | Restoration supported by
Italia Nostra Bergamo

Sandro Botticelli 1496-1504

(1445 - 1510), Storie di Virginia Romana

It is one of the last works that Botticelli made exemplifying virtue, like *The Story of Lucretia*. The painting has as a fundamental theme of violated honor and matrimonial fidelity. The combination of several scenes in a single image was common in the art of the early Renaissance. These are read from left to right:

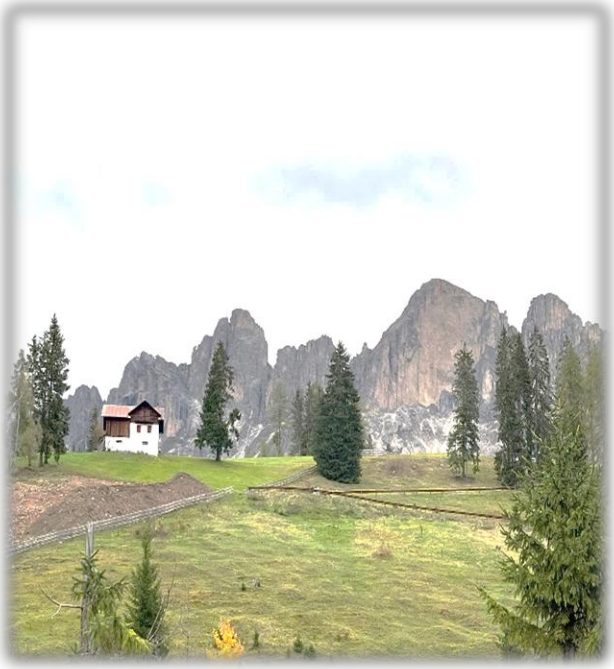
Virginia, in the company of other women, is violated or assaulted by Marcus Claudius, who wants to force her to yield to Appius Claudius Crassus;
He carries her to the tribunal presided by Appius Claudius who declares her a slave;
The father and the husband of the woman plead for clemency
The father, to preserve the family honor, kills her and flees on horseback.

This story is developed within a setting of classical architecture, in which the figures are agitated, painted with vibrant colors

Lucretia is raped by Sextus Tarquinius

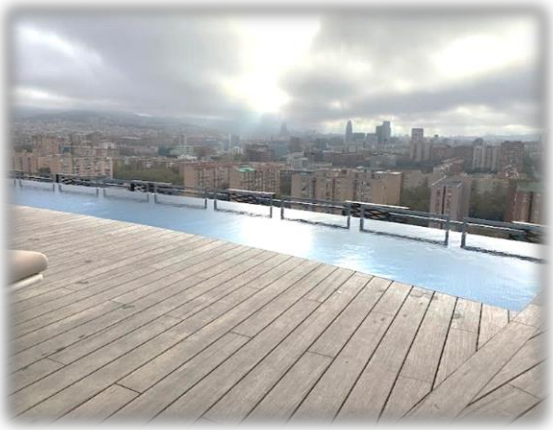
The Tragedy of Lucretia

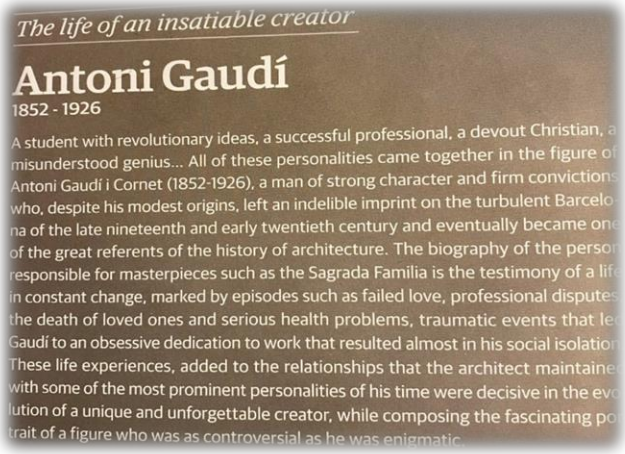
Note: The two painting below are from: **Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum of Boston, Massachusetts**

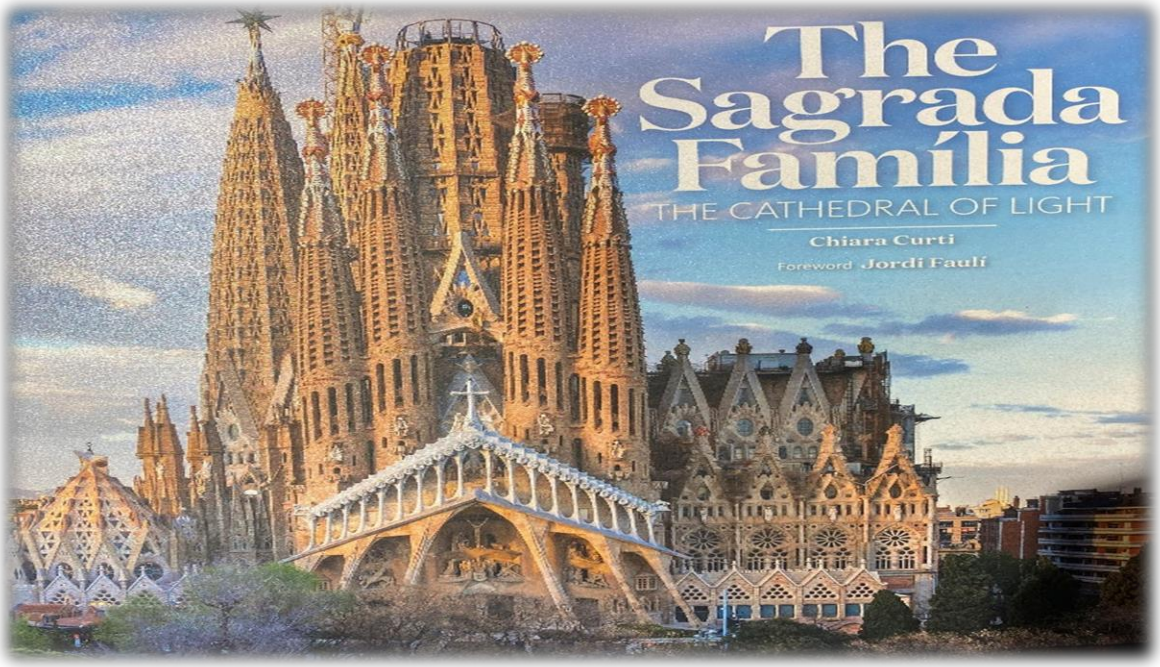


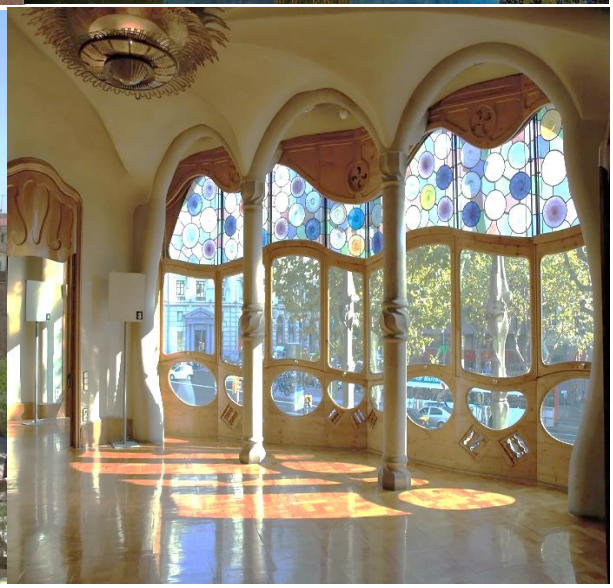
La Grazia, Italy October 11th 2024

Barcelona, Spain
October 11-14th 2024




The life of an insatiable creator
Antoni Gaudí
1852 - 1926
A student with revolutionary ideas, a successful professional, a devout Christian, a misunderstood genius... All of these personalities came together in the figure of Antoni Gaudí i Cornet (1852-1926), a man of strong character and firm convictions who, despite his modest origins, left an indelible imprint on the turbulent Barcelona of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century and eventually became one of the great referents of the history of architecture. The biography of the person responsible for masterpieces such as the Sagrada Família is the testimony of a life in constant change, marked by episodes such as failed love, professional disputes, the death of loved ones and serious health problems, traumatic events that led Gaudí to an obsessive dedication to work that resulted almost in his social isolation. These life experiences, added to the relationships that the architect maintained with some of the most prominent personalities of his time were decisive in the evolution of a unique and unforgettable creator, while composing the fascinating portrait of a figure who was as controversial as he was enigmatic.





At the bottom, where the tourist stand, you can see the size of the museum

Olympic Stadium 1992

The 1992 Barcelona Olympics were not boycotted due to political reasons, making them the first Games held without a political boycott since 1972. The historical optimism surrounding the fall of the Berlin Wall and the end of the Cold War contributed to the significance of the event1. The Games were also seen as an expression of Catalan national identity

L'Estadi es converteix en camp de refugiats a causa de la Guerra Civil
1936
El Estadio se convierte en campo de refugiados a causa de la Guerra Civil
1936
The Stadium becomes a refugee camp because of Civil War

The Republicans oversaw the evacuation of 30,000–35,000 children from their zone, starting with Basque areas, from which 20,000 were evacuated. Their destinations included the United Kingdom and the USSR, and many other countries in Europe, along with Mexico. The policy of evacuating children to foreign countries was initially opposed to by elements in the government as well as private charities, who saw the policy as unnecessary and harmful to the well-being of the evacuated children. On 21 May 1937, around 4,000 Basque children were evacuated to the UK on the aging steamship SS *Habana* from the Spanish port of Santurtzi. Upon their arrival two days later in Southampton, the children were sent to families all over England, with over 200 children accommodated in Wales. The upper age limit was initially set at 12 but raised to 15. By mid-September, all of *los niños vascos*, as they became known, had found homes with families. Most were repatriated to Spain after the war, but some 250 were still in Britain by the end of the Second World War in 1945 and some chose to settle there.

October 12th
Catalonia, Barcelona Spain

On the Sunday after our arrival in Barcelona, we joined a tour bus, though I wasn't initially excited about it. Having spent much of the previous two weeks exploring half of England from the seat of a tour bus, the idea felt less than appealing. However, the itinerary promised to be intriguing, with stops at **Tossa de Mar, Girona, and Montserrat.**

We were split into two groups, each led by one of the two young tour guides—one from Argentina, and the other from an undisclosed location, as she was strangely hesitant to reveal her origins. Gordon was hoping for the Argentine guide, likely due to his fond memories of a trip to Argentina two years earlier and his ease in understanding her accent. I, on the other hand, was hoping for the more mysterious guide, and fortunately, that's the group I ended up in.

The day before, Gordon and I explored Barcelona using a combination of a hop-on-hop-off bus tour and walking. While the bus was convenient, it was often stuck in traffic, and the audio guide quickly became repetitive. Walking, however, proved to be far more enjoyable, giving us a chance to stretch our legs and explore at our own pace. As we wandered, Gordon commented on the visible wealth in Barcelona—its striking modernist architecture, upscale shopping streets, expansive public spaces, museums, and ongoing construction projects. We'd even walked through a sophisticated modern shopping mall upon our arrival. He asked, "Where did all this wealth come from?" The answer became clearer as we traveled by bus to Tossa de Mar. Along the way, we passed agricultural farms, industrial sites, and technology hubs. These industries, alongside the revenue from Barcelona's busy sea ports and tourism, painted a fuller picture of the city's economic foundation.

Costa Mara, Bravia Site 1

Tossa de Mar, our first stop, was a charming coastal village known for its picturesque beaches, clear waters, and medieval old town. As we walked up the hill to Vila Vella, a well-preserved walled fortress, we were treated to stunning views of La Costa Brava, which reminded me of our own coastline, particularly around Big Sur. Tossa de Mar gained fame in the 1950s and '60s, largely due to frequent visits from Frank Sinatra and Ava Gardner. Ava Gardner, in particular, is said to have had an affair with a local Spanish bullfighter, adding to the town's connection with Hollywood glamour. Sinatra, her husband at the time, was reportedly less than pleased with the situation. I asked Gordon to take a picture of me with my arm around a statue of Ava Gardner, but he refused, probably thinking that a picture of me with with the statue of the Spanish bullfighter would look cuter.

Frank Sinatra stayed in Costa Brava in the 1950's. Frank with Anna Gardner

Jewish Quarter

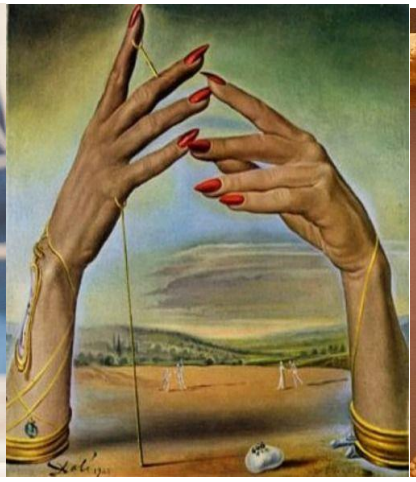
Salvador Dalí, the surrealist artist, had his first public exhibition in Girona at the age of 14. Today, the Gala-Salvador Dalí Foundation and Girona Provincial Council have inaugurated an exhibition of the original drawings for The Secret Life of Salvador Dalí

The Girona Jewish Quarter (El Call) is said to be one of the world's best preserved Jewish quarters, although it no longer has a Jewish population

Our second stop was **Girona**, a historic city renowned for its well-preserved medieval old town. Narrow cobblestone streets, squares, and buildings reflect Roman, Jewish, and Moorish influences. The city's Cathedral of St. Mary, apparently has the widest Gothic nave in the world. We explored the Jewish Quarter (El Call) and the Arab Baths, with our guide providing commentary. During our walk, I finally learned that our guide was from Slovenia. When I jokingly mentioned, "The birthplace of Melania," she responded with an interesting note: it was something her country wasn't particularly proud of.

As Dave spoke about Melania from Slovenia, I wasn't quote sure whom he was talking about. I was deeply involved in understanding when Salvador Dali had been in Girona. Her name caught my eye so I looked up name up and found she was Donald Trump's paramour. The connection between Salvador Dali and Melania not too easily to ignore.

While Dave spoke in politics, I thought of connecting the dots



Santa Maria de Montserrat, Barcalona
An abbey of the Order of Saint Benedict located on the mountain of Montserrat in Monistrol de Montserrat, Catalonia, Spain. It is notable for enshrining the image of the Virgin of Montserrat. The monastery was founded in 1025 and rebuilt between the 19th and 20th centuries. With a community of around 70 monks, the abbey is still in use to this day.

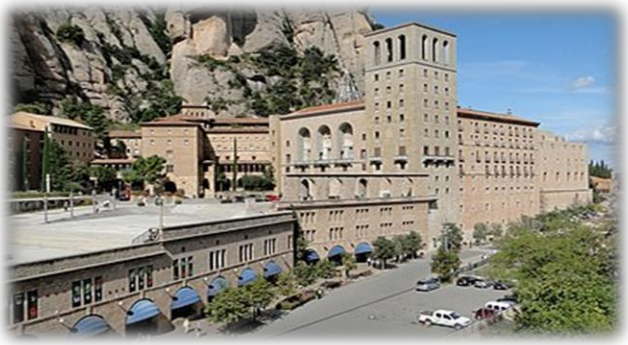
Our third stop, Montserrat, was my favorite. Montserrat is a striking mountain range located just outside Barcelona, famous for its unique rock formations and the historic Montserrat Monastery. As someone fascinated by pilgrimage sites, I was particularly drawn to this iconic location.

When we entered the monastery's church, I was immediately struck by its dark, mysterious ambiance. My gaze shifted to the altar, where a long line of people had gathered to kneel before the Black Madonna.

The statue, discovered in the 9th century by shepherds, is believed to have miraculous powers, attracting pilgrims seeking health, protection, and miracles.

According to legend, no matter where the statue was moved, it would mysteriously return to the cave in the mountain, signaling that it belonged there. As I stood in the church, I thought about other pilgrimage sites Gordon and I had visited. I had recently been to Costa Rica, where pilgrims travel long distances, sometimes on their knees, to reach the Basilica of Our Lady of the Angels.

Gordon, who has immersed himself in French traditions, pointed out that many pilgrimage sites in France, such as Lourdes, are steeped in history and legend. In fact, Lourdes is famous for the Marian apparitions experienced by Bernadette Soubirous in 1858. Meanwhile, Gordon had also visited the ancient pilgrimage site of Delphi, in Greece, where the Oracle of Apollo once delivered prophecies that drew pilgrims from all over the ancient world.



After our visit to the monastery, Gordon and I took a stroll around the perimeter of the site and had some fun posing for photos, pretending to climb the steep mountain walls. Our photos fooled no one we sent them to!

Dave and Gordon scaling the wall of worry

October 16th 2024
Granada, Alhambra

The Alhambra

The Alhambra is a palace and fortress complex located in Granada, Spain. It spans nearly 26 acres, with more than a mile of walls, 30 towers, and numerous smaller structures3. The Alhambra is the most visited monument in Spain, with approximately 3 million visitors each year.

In 1984 the Alhambra and Generalife were also listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.[1] The Alhambra is now one of the most popular tourist destinations in Spain. Research, archaeological investigations, and restoration works have also remained ongoing into the 21st century.

Mullioned windows of the Hall of the Two Sisters in the Alhambra, c. 1874. Stucco decoration can be seen on the upper walls while geometric tile mosaic is seen below

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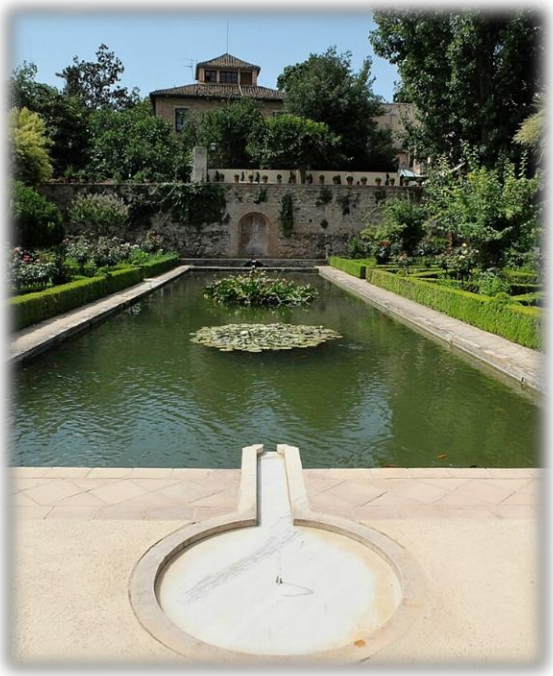

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Flamengo Dancing at flamenco performance in Granada October 17th 2024

Museo Nacional, Del Prado
October 17th, 1924
Madri, Spain

The Prado Museum building is one of the buildings constructed during the reign of Charles III (Carlos III) as part of a grandiose building scheme designed to bestow upon Madrid a monumental urban space. The building was initially conceived by José Moñino y Redondo, count of Floridablanca, and was commissioned in 1785 by Charles III for the reurbanización of the Paseo del Prado. To this end, Charles III called on one of his favorite architects, Juan de Villanueva, author also of the nearby Botanical Garden and the City Hall of Madrid.

Claude Lorrain
El Embarque de santa Paula,
1639–40

El Greco,
Hand on His Breast
c. 1580

Diego Velázquez, The
Surrender of Breda, 1634

Diego Velázquez, Las Meninas,
between 1656 and 1657

Peter Paul Rubens,
The Judgement of Paris,
1638–39

Gaspar de Crayer, *Caritas Romana*, c. 1510–11 c. 1625 **Raphael, *Portrait of a Cardinal*, c. 1625**

October 18th 2024 Back to the USA

Wanted 1974
Missing: David Keegan at large